



Contact: Will Callicott
803.952.9583
will.callicott@srs.gov

Kim Mitchell
Program Coordinator
803.952.8782
kimberly.mitchell@srs.gov

SRNS and USCA Sponsor 2010 Future City Competition

South Carolina Middle School Students create “green” housing for those in need

Aiken, S.C. – (January 21, 2010) – Designing affordable housing for those most in need is enormously complicated. But how to do it while adhering to recognized green building standards, with an emphasis on energy efficiency and a low carbon footprint?

That’s the challenge for South Carolina’s middle school students as they prepare to take part in National Engineers Week Foundation’s 2009-10 Future City® Competition. Now entering its 18th year, the Future City Competition invites seventh and eighth graders nationwide to create the cities of tomorrow and encourages interest in science, technology, engineering and math through hands-on applications.

The South Carolina Regional Competition, sponsored by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS) and the University of South Carolina Aiken’s Ruth Patrick Science Center, will be held at USCA, Jan. 23, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. (Business & Education Building – Gymnasium).

“Future City opens the eyes of our students to the opportunities found within careers involving engineering,” said Barbara Smoak, Manager, Educational Outreach, SRNS. “The various interactive tasks associated with this competition demonstrate to the students that engineering can be creative and fun. As a company, SRNS is pleased to support a program that helps these kids realize that what they learn can be used to help people improve their lives.”

Themed “**Providing An Affordable Living Space For People Who Have Lost Their Home Due to a Disaster or Financial Emergency**,” this year’s Future City Competition will attract more than 33,000 students from 1,100 middle schools in regions located across the country. The SRNS-sponsored South Carolina Regional Competition is only one of nearly 40 regions taking part this year. A few Georgia middle schools from the greater Augusta area usually participate in the South Carolina Regional Competition as well.

Participating students are asked to design a model of their city using *SimCity 4 Deluxe* software, provided by Electronic Arts, and then build a physical model of the city using recycled materials. They also write a research essay focusing on green living space design and a second narrative outlining the key features of their city.

“The first year was so much fun. I thought it was a good way to get your brain flowing, learn how to work with computers, write an essay, work with a team, and speak in front of a group,” said Elizabeth Hazelwood, a past student winner from the South Carolina Regional Competition.

One winning team from the South Carolina regional competition will qualify for a trip to the national finals in Washington, D.C., which take place during Engineer’s Week, Feb. 13-16, 2010. The National Finals Grand Prize winners receive a trip to U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama, provided by National Finals host Bentley Systems, Incorporated. The second and third prize winners receive \$5,000 and \$2,000 scholarships for their schools’ technology programs.

For information, visit www.futurecity.org.

About Future City Competition

The 18th Annual Future City Competition, for seventh and eighth grade students, is held from September 2009 through February 2010. The National Future City Competition is sponsored in part by the National Engineers Week Foundation, a consortium of professional and technical societies and major U.S. corporations. Major funding comes from Bentley Systems, Incorporated, Ford Motor Company and Shell.

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